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### Guidance for Effective Discipline Policy Speaking Points

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#### AAP Policy Statement

- The new AAP policy offers guidance to pediatricians when counseling parents about disciplining children.
- According to the policy, effective discipline has three components:
  1. providing a positive, supportive and loving relationship;
  2. using positive reinforcement;
  3. and finally, when punishment is necessary, using time-outs and other alternatives to spanking or physical punishment.
- Time-outs and other nonphysical forms of discipline are effective because children learn the consequences of breaking rules. Address bad behavior in older children by removing valued privileges temporarily.
- A warm, loving environment is the best way for parents to develop a positive relationship with and good behavior from their child.
- It's normal for every child to misbehave now and then. When children test parents' limits, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents should use methods other than spanking to discipline their children.
- Spanking has negative consequences and is no more effective than other forms of discipline. In fact, there's often a gray area between when spanking ends and child abuse begins.
- Many parents may think they can remain calm when they spank their children. However, in a 1996 survey, 44 percent of surveyed parents said they had used corporal punishment but half of those said they were angry when they punished their children. And, approximately 85 percent said they felt moderate to high anger, remorse and agitation while punishing their children.
- If the spanking is spontaneous, parents should later explain calmly why they did it, the specific behavior that provoked it, and how angry they felt. They might apologize to their child for their loss of control, because that usually helps the youngster understand and accept the spanking.
- This new policy statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics does not

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replace our policy statement about corporal punishment in schools. In 1991, the AAP issued a policy calling for a ban on corporal punishment in schools. This policy statement still stands.

- In February 1996, the American Academy of Pediatrics co-sponsored a conference about the short- and long-term consequences of corporal punishment. The proceedings from the conference were published in the October 1996 issue of Pediatrics, the peer-reviewed, scientific journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The findings from the conference do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the American Academy of Pediatrics but were considered in the development of the new policy from the AAP.

### General Parenting Tips

- Remember to keep the rules simple.
- After you set the rules, be consistent and enforce them.
- Be a good role model because children learn by your example.
- Show that you can deal with frustration and anger without resorting to violence.
- Use time outs so a child can learn that they've misbehaved.
- Emphasize rewards for good behavior instead of always punishing a child for bad behavior.

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